

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840.]

"It is only by thinking about great and good things that we come to love them, and it is only by loving them that we come to long for them, and it is only by longing for them that we are impelled to seek after them, and it is only by seeking after them that they become ours and we enter into vital experience of their beauty and blessedness."—HENRY VAN DYKE.

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JOSEPH SMITH AND THE ADVENT OF "MORMONISM."

BY LEVI EDGAR YOUNG, M.A.

THE restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the nineteenth century is the greatest event of this age. It came about in a very natural way, just as God ordained it, and which to man himself is reasonable and clear, when looked at honestly and with a purity of heart. Christianity to-day, as the Latter-day Saints interpret it, is called by the world "Mormonism." Therefore, I gladly use the term in this paper. The word to-day is fraught with great meaning.

"Mormonism" is not only a religion. It is a great scientific and philosophic interpretation of life. In time it is to become the measuring rod of all thought, not dogmatically, not intolerantly, but broadly and intellectually, morally and sincerely.

No religion or world institution demands more of man to-day than does "Mormonism." And only those who have pierced the realms of higher thought, can get a glimpse of its grandeur. It is the truly educated who will see "Mormonism" in its true light. It is the man and woman who have developed within themselves the power to think, to act, and to appreciate all the higher things of life, and the great and eternal questions of man.

Not in one generation can man rise to the sublime heights of "Mormonism." It will take many ages. We are but making the beginning, and the beginning is always fraught with many dangers,

and all kinds of struggles. This is why we must learn, more and more, to live by faith, pursuing the great lines laid down by God in all our thoughts and actions. The first principles of the gospel will always remain intact, but the great and glorious truths of the world and nature will be ferreted out as man studies and works, and becomes the master of his own being and nature's laws.

"Mormonism" calls for the onward march of man. It takes a stand upon a higher level than humanity has reached, and holds out the hand of fellowship to all. It beckons the race on, because of its light and glory within. It recognizes man; "splendid, and sorrowful, inscrutable man." "Mormonism" sees man's proud brow, his bold, lustrous eyes "aglow with light of fearless, world-conceiving thought;" of his mighty power that is destined to lift him in time to the throne of a god. For man is marching boldly ahead, forward and upward, bent on mastering the secrets of heaven and earth. His eye is on the great celestial light of heaven.

Christianity had been in existence some eighteen hundred years. The world of civilized powers had recognized Christ to be the model character of history. Within Christianity had grown all sorts of systems and creeds, dogmas and notions. Man had always been a religious creature, but religion solved no problems for him. This is proved by the dissensions in the eighteenth century, when the French, German, and English Deists were denouncing the Christian church, and were asking for a solution of the world's social, political, and industrial problems. The eighteenth century was the dawn of the Age of Freedom in its true sense. In that century came forth the God-inspired Constitution of the United States, the greatest document of its kind ever given to man. In that age there were new interpretations of life put forward; men began to solve the problems of nature and the daily life. There was agnosticism on one hand, and religion on the other. As the French Deists condemned the creeds, they grew faster, and by the beginning of the nineteenth century, Christ was being interpreted in a thousand different ways. And yet the Christian world maintains that Christianity is an absolute religion. True, there had been great and good men who gave us many interpretations of truth pertaining to the gospel of Christ. George Fox, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and the noble and beautiful character, John Wesley, all contributed great thoughts to the world's onward march.

In the world, Christian institutions were going on, but with the absence of the Christian life. In fact, Voltaire was right in his stand that the "purest unbelief could accomplish what the formal belief of the day was trying to bring about." No one was living, nor did live, until the advent of Joseph Smith, to give to the world a thorough-going belief in Christianity, which would revolutionize the conduct of men. In reviewing the Christian world, we

find that its promise had little to do with its performance. Humanity was thrown back to torture and ruin, as men are thrown back by the Christian world of to-day. A close study of the conditions of the time, just before the advent of "Mormonism," indicates that the need of the world was not more institutions of Christianity, but more real Christianity. The power of Christianity had been lost.

Then again, the world had too long believed in the expediency of repentance. Repentance had become illogical, because it was supposed to be only necessary on the spur of the moment and when a man was face to face with death. As to faith in God, man had no faith, and God had become a "gaseous vertebrate," a non-entity. The French Revolutionists had announced what the world was fast accepting: "There is no God but Reason." And so the god of Reason supplanted the true and living God of Israel. What the world needed, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, was God. Not God in the heavens and in the past alone; but God to-day and here with us as men. What the apostles of Christ knew, the world needed to know at first hand. It was a time when solid, scholarly, substantial scientific thought should take hold of the knowledge of God, and build towards Him and the Savior of the world. Some one has warned us:

"Beware when God lets loose a prophet." And God let loose a prophet!

The restoration of the gospel of Christ came at a new epoch of the world's history. The United States had been established as a great and powerful nation, a nation which gave example to the world of religious and political liberty. Old world ideas were given up. A new and big, broad country was fast filling up with the best bone and sinew of European nations. People were flocking to the shores of America, and looking to the divine Constitution of the United States as a source of hope and life. The age of invention was to dawn. The hardy pioneer was to force his way into the west. Fundamental laws and principles of future American life were fast being formed. With the new age came new hopes; with the new nation came a new people.

No other land could have been the home of the restored gospel. The United States was the type of nation that the world had never seen before. It had been established by the best thought and manhood of the race. Emerson truly said:

"We live in a new and exceptional age. America is another name for opportunity. Our whole history appears like a last effort of the Divine Providence in behalf of the human race."

One hundred years ago, the Abbe Genty, a distinguished French scholar of that time, published an essay on the "Result of the Discovery of America by Europe." He closes his paper by saying: "The Independence of the Anglo-Americans is the event most

likely to accelerate the revolution which is to renew the happiness of the world. In the bosom of this new nation are the true treasures which are to renew the world." He names the relief to crowded Europe as one of the blessings that is to come to mankind, the emancipation of slaves, the end of conquest, a universal peace, and the conversion of the world to Christianity.*

This new nation, brought about by the directive force and power of God, says to all: "You are a child of God. Here is the world of God. Enter. We will do our best. There shall be no king. There shall be no subject. There shall be no master. There shall be no slave."

And this lesson is the eternal lesson of to-day. "It is not gold, nor silver, nor brass, nor lead, nor iron, which will bring the eternal peace. It is truth, honor and justice. It is Faith, Hope and Love. It is on the virtues of mankind, upon the freedom of mankind, and the gospel of Jesus Christ that the future of mankind is to be builded." Our Puritan fathers, when landing on the bleak New England shore, in 1620, had announced to all future posterity that through the divine grace of God should this country live. Their compact read:

"In the name of God, Amen. We, whose names are here under-written, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, etc., having undertaken for the glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith, and honor of our king and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do, by these presents, solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and of one another, covenant and combine ourselves into a civic body politic for the better ordering and preservation, and in furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue thereof to enact, constitute, and frame just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape Cod, the eleventh of November, in the year of the reign of our sovereign Lord, King James, of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth, Anno Domini 1620."

The United States has been a blessed land from the beginning, and is the soil where the preparation for the restoration of Christianity took place. It is, as the Abbe Genty said, the country "where the conversion of the world to Christianity will take place."

It is not my purpose to trace for you the life of Joseph Smith. You know his life's work full well. I simply wish to analyze briefly his character. No man of our day has been more misunderstood. His name has been held "for good and evil" throughout the world.

In childhood, Joseph Smith was a dreamer. His thoughts were often sent into the great worlds beyond. And it is the dreamer who really contributes to the race's betterment. The child's soul

* From E. E. Hale's "Lecture on the American Revolution."

in its first innocence sympathized with the sublime in nature, and with the deep mysteries of Holy Writ. Joseph's soul was one of greatness. We read in history of how men have had the power to make great mental grasps of situations. Some have known the world and its workings of nature from the first. Some men live who do more thinking in a day than the average untrained mind does in a lifetime. The boy Joseph's mind was naturally strong. His brain, early subjected to great concentration, drew from its own rich stores a crowd of images, wonderful for their reality and their vigor. He was a thinker along the lines of mysticism. What great mind is not? His senses were endowed with a perfection which gave them exquisite delicacy. He longed for a knowledge of the meaning of life, and the relationship of his own soul to His God. Thousands of men in history have wished for the same knowledge, but have gone at the solution of the problem in their own way, and have plodded on till death, when they were no doubt given the key in heaven. But Joseph, using his mental faculties, and reasoning, and reasoning logically, went honestly to his Father and asked for light. And the light came. The results of Joseph Smith's prayer in the woods, on that spring morning, in 1820, have been mightily far reaching, and the claim that he was visited by God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ is one of the most startling statements in the world's history. People have laughed it to scorn; and psychologists have designated it as a peculiar hypnotic state of mind. And yet the boy gave the statement candidly and fearlessly to the world, and lived the common life of man. To think of there being angels and a God in the form of man! Terrible in the estimation of some moderns. Yet it is only a few days ago, when a famous book of the age, called *The World of Life*, made its appearance, and the statements therein are startling the world of science. The work is by Alfred Russell Wallace, a contemporary and friend of Charles Darwin. Mr. Wallace has reached his eighty-eighth year, and now in the evening of life, closes his great work by saying:

"Some such conception seems to me to be in harmony with the universal teaching of nature, everywhere an almost infinite variety, not as a detailed design, but as a foreseen result of the constitution of the universe. The vast whole is, therefore, a manifestation of his powers—perhaps of his very self—but by the agency of his ministering angels, through many descending grades of intelligence and power.

"It is when we look upon man as being here for the very best purpose of developing diversity and individuality, to be further advanced in a future life, that we see more clearly the whole object of our earth life as a preparation for it. In this world we have the maximum of diversity produced, with a potential capacity for individual educability. In the spirit world, death will not cut short the period of educational advancement. The best conditions and opportunities will be afforded for continuous progress to a higher status, while all the diversities produced here will lead to an infinite variety, charm, and use that could have been brought about in no other way."

And what has our Prophet-teacher said, as far back as 1813?

"Whatever principles of intelligence we attain unto in this life, will rise with us in the resurrection ;

"And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come."

Emerson has said, in his essay on Intelligence, that the hardest task in the world is to think. Now Joseph Smith was a thinking boy, and he became an educated man in the true sense of the term. He had a mental grasp of great things. He knew nature's laws, and the "Mormon" people have never had a greater advocate of the reading of books and the development of the intellect. As founder of the University of Nauvoo, he directed its policy, and it was opened for the purpose of bringing the youth of those early days in contact with what is most vital to their welfare, mentally, morally, and physically.

Every epoch-making mind, it has been said, is at the same time child and father, disciple and master, of his age. So it was with the boy prophet. He was the child of all the good of the past, he was to become, through work and study, and the divine call of God, a father to an age which, for mental, moral and spiritual development, will eclipse all the ages of the past.

The one great fact that impresses the world in the life of Joseph Smith was his sincerity. It is Carlyle who says again and again that "sincerity, a deep, great, genuine sincerity, is the first characteristic of all men in any way heroic." This is a truth of transcendent importance, and one that must be taken and believed in by the race. For sincerity of purpose means honesty of heart, and the honest heart is open to the conviction of truth. But it is not in the "Mormon" prophet's sincerity that one finds his greater manhood. It is in his magnificent contribution to the world's onward march that makes him the hero of the nineteenth century.

His was a critical, intellectual type of mind. This is shown in his analysis of the ethical condition of the race, as well as the wrongs stalking among the society of the day. He was an iconoclast, however, only as he could substitute a much better thought for the one he opposed. His keenness of intellect permeated all the phases of modern thought. He understood the relationship of man to God ; he knew men's hearts and desires as a psychologist does ; he understood the intricate workings of the government of the United States ; he built schools and had in mind a splendid school system ; he was a linguist of no mean ability ; and with it all, his was a practical and all-absorbing intellect whose great ideal was to reach out for the infinite.

Now as to the advent of "Mormonism" and its significance. It is a distinctly new force in the onward march of mankind. It is to be and is now the embodiment of all truth and all future

intellectual development. It begins with nature and builds upon the great natural laws in the physical world. Its philosophic and religious teachings do not lie upon beaten paths of formalism and insincerity, but in the secret recesses of the soul. It has the message that true religion does not lie in forms and ceremonies, but in the soul and in life. It stands for the highest of ethical equity; its justice is an ideal justice "transformed by reason into moral force;" its conception of life resonant with the great calls made on man for the betterment of the race. It is to be preached as the gospel of salvation, preserving as it does the absolute fundamentals taught by the Redeemer of the World, for the divine preservation of the race. Its effort is to arouse the world, to open its eyes to the divine truth of God; and to have man give up his false ideals and wrong interpretation of life. It revolts against crime and hypocritical society, and asks for a rejuvenation of the race along the lines laid down by Christ Himself. It stands for truth and freedom. It stands for individuality and progressiveness, along those lines which will be learned by the better manhood of the race, and which, when learned, will be put into the practice of the daily life. Coming as it did in the nineteenth century, it entered the world at a time when the true Reformation in history was about to dawn. "Mormonism" will take the great thoughts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and all the ages to come, and, molding them into great truths of life, practical life, will be the greatest of all creative and reforming forces in the world of humanity.—*Improvement Era*.

THE PEACE OF FAITH.

When winds are raging o'er the upper ocean,
 And billows wild contend with angry roar,
 'Tis said, far down, beneath the wild commotion,
 That peaceful stillness reigneth evermore.

Far, far beneath, the noise of tempests dieth,
 And silver waves chime ever peacefully,
 And no rude storm, how fierce soe'er it lieth,
 Disturbs the Sabbath of that deeper sea.

So to the heart that knows thy love, O Purest!
 There is a temple, sacred evermore,
 And all the babble of life's angry voices
 Dies in hushed stillness at its peaceful door.

Far, far away, the roar of passion dieth
 And loving thoughts rise calm and peacefully,
 And no rude storm, how fierce soe'er it lieth,
 Disturbs the soul that dwells, O Lord, in Thee.

O Rest of rest! O Peace, serene, eternal!
 Thou ever livest, and Thou changest never:
 And in the secret of Thy presence dwelleth
 Fulness of joy forever and forever.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 1912.

EDITORIAL.

IMPROVING OUR LIVES.

THERE is no time of the year that usually gives rise to so many and such serious thoughts as the day of its beginning. The realization that another year has come naturally suggests some thoughts of the old one that has passed and gone forever. Many changes and experiences each passing year surely brings to us all. Pleasure and pain, success and failure, in varying measure, the years bring to all people. The passing of each successive year, as a definite period of time, is apt to suggest a thought of that eternity of which the years are but fragments. Closely allied to this is the thought of our individual relation to the endless stream of time and our moral standing in the great, eternal universe in which we have our existence. Those who have no fuller knowledge of eternal verities than is afforded by the speculations and teachings of uninspired men, and who regard themselves as no more than created beings, to whom the span of earthly life is the only real existence of which they feel assured, may well view with feelings of sadness and regret each successive reminder of the passing years. The Latter-day Saints, however, have a surer and a far greater knowledge than any other people as to their relation to the universe and its Divine Ruler. They have learned that they are co-eternal with these and that they are possessed of a being and an identity that are alike indestructible. They can thus afford to look forward in joyous anticipation of the glorious events that they have learned are yet to transpire in connection with the race and the world to which they are related.

Having an assurance, through the Spirit and revelations of God, of the certainty of an endless life, and the means through which the highest joys and glories are to be obtained, the Latter-day Saints are thus enabled to see the true relation of the present life to the greater eternal one. Nothing can be more helpful to us, therefore, as free agents, possessed of an eternal existence, than to review the past, in the light of our present knowledge and experience, and alter our course and conduct so far as wisdom may indicate the necessity. It is our high privilege in this earthly life to learn by increasing experience more and more of the true nature of things and to govern our lives by this increasing knowledge.

Much of the prime wisdom of life may be truly said to be derived from an earnest and thoughtful gleaning of the lessons that are impressed upon us by the experiences through which we are continually passing. An occasional act of introspection need not necessarily, as is supposed by many, lead to a morbid and over-conscious view of life. To be continually revolving within the limits of one's consciousness, as some are wont to do, a given set of ideas, will undoubtedly lead to that result. An earnest inward glance, now and then, for the purpose of ascertaining and testing our motives and aims, with the deliberate intention of applying the knowledge thus gained for a better control and direction of our lives, is a most valuable and necessary means of improvement. The character of none of us is absolutely fixed and invariable, but is susceptible of improvement to an almost inconceivable extent. If the habits and aims of our past and present lives are beneath the knowledge and understanding we have, then it is our bounden duty to elevate them to the standard that we clearly see to be right and possible. The failure to make an earnest endeavor to do so is an admission of moral weakness that is not compatible with self-respect and spiritual progress. The only way to secure a continual advancement in light and truth is through loyalty and obedience to the measure of the same we have already received. It is our duty and privilege, as free agents, to bring every faculty and power of our beings under the control of our individual wills. Having the blessed assurance of an eternal life, and the highest perfections and glories being conditionally offered to us, it is eminently wise that we should follow the highest light obtainable, and aim to reach the loftiest goal.

How complete is the equipment we have been given to help us on our upward journey! What beautiful revelations inspired seers of God have given us of the celestial world where we may make our eternal home! How clearly has the path of duty been marked out for us! For our guidance we have the sure word of the Eternal God and for a companion through all our journey His Holy Spirit. Being privileged to live in these last days, we have thereby the accumulated knowledge and experience of all the ages that have preceded us for our instruction. We have been endowed with powers of mind that enable us to understand and apply the knowledge we receive from all these sources. We can set before us the good and the noble and determine to follow in their footsteps, or we can yield to every passing influence and drift aimlessly with the tide. We have, as Latter-day Saints, been privileged to learn of the perfections and glory of our Heavenly Father and the means by which we may at length attain unto the same exalted rank. Possessing such powers and possibilities, it is surely becoming that we should occasionally call ourselves to account, note carefully the things wherein we fail, and determine to strive more earnestly to live up to our high privileges.

To have come to a knowledge of the supreme things in life, and to be possessed of the power to pursue and attain them, is to be elevated to a high plane of moral responsibility. This is the proud position that is occupied by the Latter-day Saints. We should therefore strive continually to be worthy of the position we occupy. To know the will of God concerning us and faithfully to live up to that knowledge is to be a victor in the battle of life. It is true that we cannot by any single effort of the will, or by formulating any number of resolutions, elevate ourselves to the plane of perfect obedience, but we can compare our lives with the law of God, and where we are conscious of failure, determine to the utmost of our power to improve ourselves. Many who have lived noble and useful lives have been helped very much by firmly resolving to do certain desirable things and then earnestly striving to do them. The ability to carry out such resolutions will depend very largely upon the strength of our individual wills. There are other considerations, which are usually overlooked, but which must be taken into account, in any really earnest endeavors to improve our lives. We must not resolve to do things that are manifestly beyond our power. To expect to attain to perfection by a few bounds, or by a series of mighty resolves, is to expect unreasonable things and certain to lead to failure. To determine to begin to live a perfect life upon a certain day, whether it be New Year's Day or some other, is an act of extreme folly. But to ascertain our individual failings, carefully to consider them, and determine to overcome them, one by one, is possible, and, if we are earnest in our endeavors, may be for us the path to certain victory. As a rule, resolutions that are hastily made are very seldom kept. Such matters must be earnestly thought out until the understanding is thoroughly clear as to the wisdom and the possibility of the course to be pursued. If the will can then be concentrated with sufficient intensity, and is enabled to assert its rightful dominion, we may hope slowly and surely to improve our lives. Due thought, earnest desire and resolute determination, if united, can certainly enable us to surmount many difficulties. If to these be added the aid which our Heavenly Father is willing to give to all who ask of Him in sincerity, then there is nothing that is required of us that we may not be enabled to accomplish.

The endeavor to improve our lives will be a source of increasing joy and tend more and more to bring us into right and harmonious relations with our Heavenly Father and all His children. To seek and find the people and the things that are good and true, to love them and be loyal to them, is a worthy ideal. To endeavor to improve ourselves and our conditions, and gracefully to accept the results and make the most of them, under all circumstances, will contribute to peace and happiness. To acknowledge the hand of God in all things, and yield our wills in a loving preference to His, whenever they come in conflict, will bring Divine light and guid-

ance to us continually. To receive and obey and bear faithful witness to the truth of the gospel, will bring to us eternal honors. To keep the commandments of God will bring the realization of every righteous desire of our hearts and secure for us eternal life and joy and dominion in celestial worlds to come.

H. I.

PRESIDENT HYRUM W. VALENTINE and wife, Sister Ella B. Valentine, arrived in Liverpool, per s.s. *Hesperian*, on Sunday, 31st December, 1911. After resting a few days, and visiting some relatives in England, they left Liverpool on Wednesday, 10th January, 1912, for London, en route to Zurich, Switzerland, the headquarters of the Swiss and German mission, over which President Valentine has been appointed to preside, thus succeeding President Thomas E. McKay, who has been honorably released to return home.

DUTY AND AUTHORITY OF THE TEACHER.

PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH, at the third session of the last semi-annual conference, said:

There are just a few words that I desire to say in relation to the subject on which some of the brethren have dwelt this morning, which I have no doubt they perfectly understand, but which, so far as I have heard, they omitted to say, and that is this: that the teachers who visit our homes do not come to visit us as Elders or Seventies or High Priests or Apostles or Presidents. The teachers have jurisdiction over the membership of the Church, or the members of the Church, and when they come to visit us in our homes they, in their calling as teachers, visit us as members of the Church, and not as officers or members of the Priesthood; consequently it is the duty of all members of the Church, no matter who they are, or what priesthood they hold, nor what office they hold in the Church,—it is their duty to disrobe themselves, if you please, of all authority except the right of membership, or to be members in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for it is the duty and prerogative of the teacher to inquire into the standing of members of the Church. Now, if we will only bear that in mind we will have no difficulty at all with reference to our “high and mighty” position in the Church. When the teachers visit us we will remember that we are simply members of the Church, and it is the duty of the teachers to visit the members and to teach the members and to instruct the members of the Church, and to see that the members of the Church have no hard feelings, one against another; that the members of the Church are united in their family capacities, and that they are in fellowship with the people of God, with their neighbors and with all

mankind, and especially that they are in fellowship with God. That is the duty of the teacher; and when we keep that in mind, everything respecting the duties and authority of the teachers will be plain and clear to us. I want to say this, too, that if somebody should happen to mount upon the "high horse" of his authority, in the Church, it will be very becoming in the teacher to gently take him off his "high horse," and bring him down to the level of his membership, and let him understand that he (the teacher) is there to teach him as a member of the Church, and not as an officer of it. The teacher has a right to inquire into the performance of the duties of all members, and learn whether they are doing their duty as members in all things or not.

REMARKABLE ANSWER TO PRAYER.

ON Sunday evening, the 21st of November, 1911, in company with three members of Cache Stake Religion Class Board, I attended a meeting held in the Eighth Ward of Logan City, Utah. One of the speakers, Elder Downs, gave a short talk on prayer, which is one of the six steps in Religion Class work. He related a very remarkable experience which he had while in the mission field, and believing it would be interesting to the readers of the *Millennial Star*, and strengthening to their faith, I decided to write it and send it to that little bearer of glad tidings.

Elder Downs said: "I am going to relate a little experience which I do not remember having spoken of before in public since my return from the mission field. About nine years ago I was in the city of Manchester, England, laboring as a missionary. I had been engaged in the work but a short time, and felt very keenly my weakness in trying to fill such an important position.

"One Sunday morning my companion went to another branch, to assist in the services there. A peculiar feeling took possession of me that day—a foreboding of trouble and disappointment. I tried to rid myself of it, but could not do so. In the afternoon I went down to the hall in which our meetings were held. I went to the box in which the sacramental service and the hymn books were kept, to take those articles out, and found the box locked. I then remembered that my companion had taken the key with him. My first impulse was to break open the box, but remembering that the proprietor of the hall had threatened to deprive us of the use of the building if any of the property were damaged, I decided that it would not be a wise act for me to break open the box. I had now found the cause of the feeling of disappointment which had held possession of me all day.

"I knelt down before the Lord and prayed in all earnestness and sincerity for means to be provided for me by which I might be able to unlock the box. I then went back to my lodge, and repairing

to my room, repeated the prayer I had offered up in the hall a short time before. As the time of meeting drew near, I set out again for the hall. I prayed in my heart as I walked along the streets. Hundreds of people were passing to and fro. As I was making my way through the crowd, I saw on the ground a small purse. I stopped and picked it up and dropped it into my pocket. On arriving at the hall I opened the purse ("that little purse," said Elder Downs, holding it up before the audience) "and the only thing I found inside was a key, which is in the purse now, and you can imagine my surprise and delight when I found that it fitted the lock just as though it had been made for it. I opened the box, took out the sacramental vessels and books, after which I thanked the Lord for hearing and answering my prayer."

The incident related by Elder Downs is not more remarkable than the one recorded in the New Testament, concerning the finding by Peter of a piece of money in the mouth of a fish. The Lord is the same, yesterday, to-day and to-morrow.

Salt Lake City.

W. A. MORTON.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Baptisms.—On Sunday, December 17th, 1911, a baptismal service was held at Northampton (Birmingham conference), two persons being added to the fold of Christ. Elder H. W. Noble officiated.

A baptismal service was held in the Whitworth Baths, Manchester (Manchester conference), on January 6th, 1912, when eleven converts were added to the Church by baptism. Five were from Bolton, three from Manchester, two from Bury, and one from Oldham branch. Elders Edward Howard, J. J. Allen, and R. R. Haslam officiated.

The "Deseret News" Christmas Number.—The Christmas edition of the *Deseret Evening News*, Salt Lake City, issued Saturday, December 16th, 1911, has reached this office. It consists of one hundred and sixteen pages, with handsome illustrated cover. Each successive year the Christmas *News* shows a still higher degree of excellence. The advantages, progress and resources of Utah and the inter-mountain region are set forth by the ablest and best informed writers, with the highest skill known to the printer's art. It is a veritable mine of information on all matters of general interest pertaining to Salt Lake City and the State of Utah. The illustrations, as heretofore, are up to the high standard for which that paper has so long been noted. The edition is another evidence of the spirited enterprise that is bringing increasing prosperity to Utah and her people. It reflects the highest credit upon all engaged in its production.

Successful Socials.—On Friday evening, December 29th, 1911, one hundred of the saints and friends of the Grimsby branch (Hull conference), met in Thrift Hall, Pasture Street, to participate in the annual Christmas social. After listening to a well-rendered program, dancing and games were indulged in, with fruit and pastry to the heart's content. Those not taking part enjoyed themselves in social chat. The room was tastefully decorated for the occasion with Christmas holly and mistletoe. At parting all joined in kindest wishes for a Happy New Year.

On December 20th, 1911, a Sunday school social was held in the Ethrington Hall, Gainsboro branch (Hull conference). A fine program was rendered, after which the members of the Sunday school were presented with books for good attendance. Also on January 3rd, 1912, a social was held to begin the New Year's work. All present had a delightful time. A leading feature of each social was the service of refreshments.

A very enjoyable social was held at the Museum Rooms, Ipswich, December 26th, 1911, the purpose being to encourage the Sunday school children and bring into closer relations the saints and investigators. Refreshments were provided for sixty. A good program was rendered, which included interesting games, after which a Christmas tree was stripped of its many presents, and these were given to the children present. The social was a decided success.

On Boxing Day, December 26th, 1911, a very enjoyable "tea" and concert was given by the saints and friends of the Keighley branch (Leeds conference). The hall was tastefully decorated and the "tea" delicious. Members of other branches were present, and their contributions to the program were much appreciated. Games were afterwards indulged in and enjoyed by all. As a social event, the evening was a decided success.

On Thursday, December 28th, 1911, a "tea" and concert was given by the sisters of the Relief Society of the Northampton branch (Birmingham conference). A goodly number of saints and friends turned out, and all had a splendid time. The proceeds will go to the Relief Society funds.

At the Exchange Buildings, Walsall (Birmingham conference), December 28th, 1911, a party was given by the Sunday school. The "tea" was served in good style, after which a program was rendered and some interesting games were indulged in. A good feeling prevailed and all expressed themselves as pleased with the entertainment. Credit is due to all who helped to make the gathering a success.

On Friday, December 29th, 1911, the members of the Northampton branch (Birmingham conference) Sunday school were entertained by the officers and teachers at a social. The children rendered a program in good style. During the evening prizes were awarded for the past year's work.

A farewell party in honor of Elder E. D. Hatch, and a New Year's party for the saints and friends of the Sheffield conference, was held in the Latter-day Saints' Church, Sheffield, on New Year's night. After a very interesting program had been rendered, those present indulged in a few games. All present felt that the evening had been well spent.

A very pleasant and enjoyable entertainment was given on Wednesday, January 3rd, 1912, by the saints and friends of the Hanley branch (Manchester conference), in honor of Elder M. Ray Pixton, who will shortly leave for his home. A set of silver fish servers was presented to him as a token of appreciation and esteem. An excellent program was given, all taking part and rendering the various items in a pleasing manner. An excellent spirit was present throughout the entertainment.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOR THEOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT.

LESSON XXII.—MY BROTHER AND I.

I. MUTUAL FORGIVENESS REQUIRED.

1. Method of adjusting difficulties (Matt. 18: 15-20). (a) At first a personal matter between the parties. (b) Aid of others to be enlisted if necessary. (c) Extreme measures to be adopted only after all other efforts have failed.
2. Forgiveness not limited by rule (verses 21, 22). (a) Peter's question—How many times shall I forgive? (b) The Lord's answer. (c) A later instance (Luke 17: 3, 4).

II. CONDITIONS ON WHICH GOD FORGIVES:

1. The prayer prescribed. "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."
2. Forgiveness may be denied us (Matt. 6: 12, 14, 15; see also 7: 2).
3. Gifts not acceptable from the un-forgiving (Matt. 5: 23, 24; compare III Nephi 12: 23, 24).
4. The sin of refusing to forgive our fellows. (Doc. and Cov. 64: 9, 10).

III. ILLUSTRATED IN PARABLE.

1. The unmerciful servant (Matt. 18: 23-35). (a) The servant's great indebtedness. (b) His petition for mercy. (c) The master's kindness. (d) The servant's severity to his fellow who owed him a trifling sum. (e) The punishment.
2. The lesson. (a) Mercy is for the merciful. (b) Justice may demand retribution—"With what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged."

Note: Laws of early times were very severe concerning debtors; the entire family was involved in danger through indebtedness (see II Kings 4: 1; Lev. 25: 39).

THE BRIGHT SPOT.

Make a bright spot every day
For some heart along the way;
Make a place to rest and lean
With the blue sky in between;
That the weary passing there
May be glad of sun and air,
And beyond their lanes of gloom
Hear the birds and see the bloom.

Make a bright spot as you go
Where the cheerful heart may grow;
With a word or with a deed
Plant the kindly spirit's seed,
That some far on day of need,
Some one weary with his load,
Passing by the golden road,
May beneath its foliage find
Joy and rest and peace of mind.

FOLGER MCKINSEY, in *Baltimore Sun*.

DIED.

WHITE.—At Glasgow, Scotland, December 6th, 1911, Donaldina Grant, the beloved daughter of Brother and Sister William White, aged one year and four months; blessed by Elder William A. Budge.

BIRKHEAD.—At Barnsley (Sheffield conference), December 13th, 1911, George K. Birkhead, the beloved son of Fred and Sarah Kellet Birkhead; born July 31st, 1908.

SMITH.—At Denton, England (Manchester conference), January 4th, 1912, Sister Avis Smith; born October 16th, 1869; baptized November 19th, 1907, by Elder Julian M. Thomas. She died in full faith and fellowship of the Church. Utah papers please copy.

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